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FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

SUBJECT: US TROOP REDUCTIONS

1. YOU WILL NOTE FROM SEPARATE REPORTING CABLE THAT SECRETARY ASSURED AMBASSADOR BUI DIEM NOVEMBER 24 THAT YOU WOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO CONSULT WITH PRESIDENT THIEU IN ADVANCE OF THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT OF REDUCTION OF U.S. FORCES IN VIET-NAM.

2. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO INFORM PRESIDENT THIEU THAT PRESIDENT NIXON PLANS TO ANNOUNCE ON DECEMBER 15 THAT HE HAS ORDERED A FURTHER REDUCTION OF 50,000 U.S. TROOPS IN VIET-NAM BY MID-APRIL, 1970, THUS REDUCING THE TOTAL U.S. FORCES IN VIET-NAM ON THAT DATE TO A CEILING OF 434,000.

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5
State Dept. Guidelines
By KBH, NARA, Date 6/11/99

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3. YOU SHOULD STATE THAT PRESIDENT NIXON UNDERSTANDS PRESIDENT THIEU'S NEED TO PUT THIS FURTHER REDUCTION IN PROPER PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTEXT FOR VIETNAMESE PUBLIC OPINION. WE WOULD THEREFORE WELCOME A STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT THIEU AT THE TIME OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S ANNOUNCEMENT STATING THAT GVN AND U.S. HAD CONSULTED IN ADVANCE, THAT GVN HAD ADVISED U.S. OF ITS READINESS TO UNDERTAKE EFFECTIVE REPLACEMENT OF THESE FORCES, AND THAT HE AGREES WITH DECISION. IF HE AGREES, WE WILL COORDINATE FURTHER ON EXACT TIME OF ANNOUNCEMENTS.

4. YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE NEED TO KEEP INFORMATION IN PARA 2 ABOVE ABSOLUTELY SECRET UNTIL ANNOUNCEMENT IS MADE. YOU MAY MAKE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO VICE PRESIDENT KY'S PREMATURE STATEMENT AT TIME OF LAST TROOP REDUCTION. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NEITHER DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT NOR NUMBER OF TROOPS INVOLVED BE LEAKED IN ADVANCE. WE LEAVE TO PRESIDENT THIEU HOW TO PREVENT LEAKS, IN LIGHT OF NEED FOR FULL AND FRANK CONSULTATIONS.

5. WE INTEND TO INFORM OTHER ALLIES SHORTLY BEFORE ANNOUNCEMENT.

ROGERS

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